

1981

## UA51/3/3 Walk Talk

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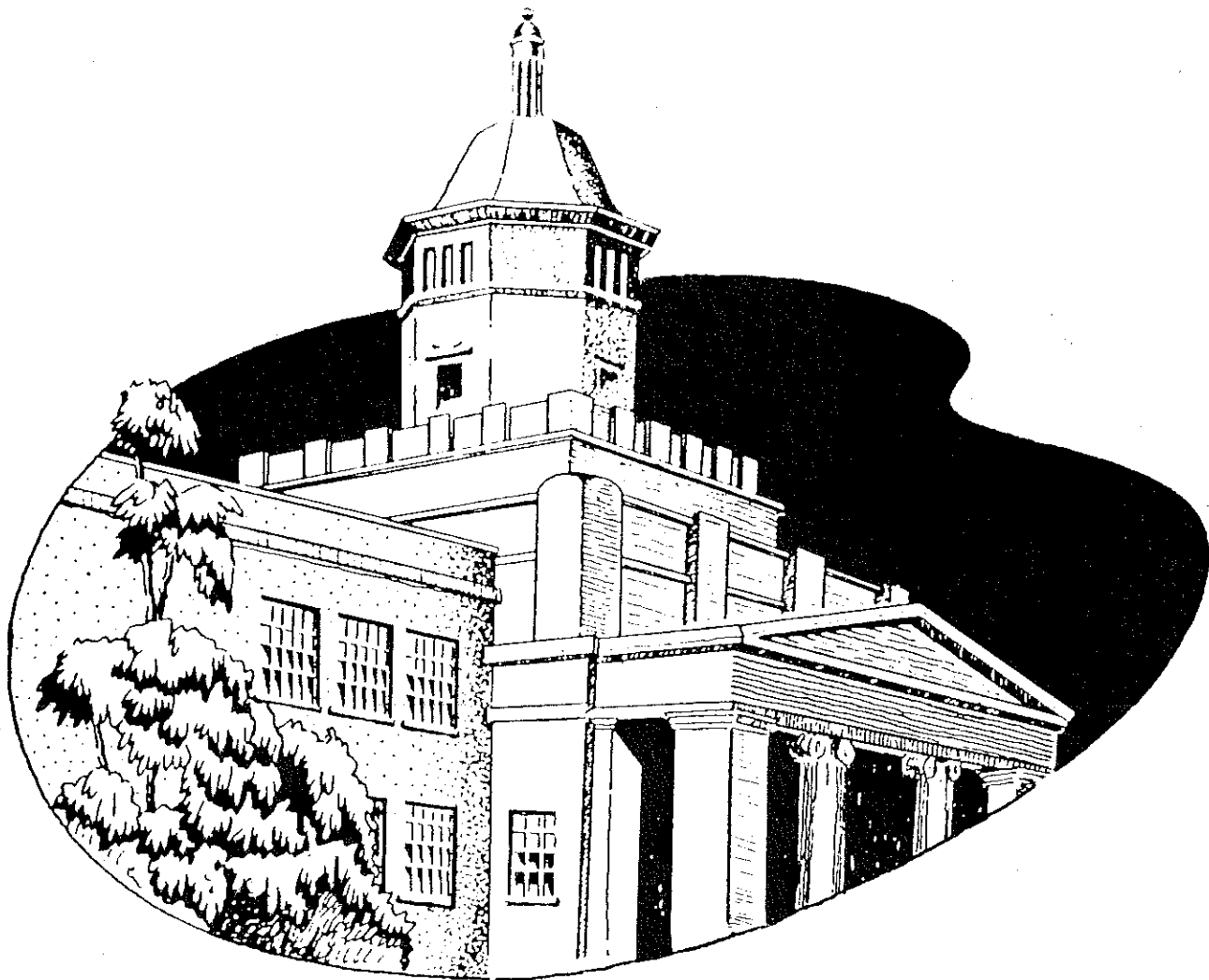
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# WALK TALK



ARCHITECTURE OF BRINTON B. DAVIS

on the campus of

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

sponsored by THE KENTUCKY MUSEUM  
Western Kentucky University  
Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101  
(502) 745-2592

BRINTON B. DAVIS

1862-1952

Brinton B. Davis was born in Natchez, Mississippi. He became a Kentuckian when he moved to Louisville in 1902. Davis studied architecture with his father, Jacob B. Davis, and designed many structures in Kentucky, Georgia, Illinois, Tennessee, Mississippi and Florida.

One of Davis' best known structures is the Jefferson County Armory, now known as Louisville Gardens. When it opened in 1905 as headquarters for the First Kentucky Infantry, it was said to be second only to New York's Madison Square Gardens in the size of its unobstructed floor space. Davis also designed the Watterson and Kentucky Hotels in Louisville.

In 1909, Davis was employed by Western Kentucky State Normal School with Henry Wright as building and landscape architects respectively. That same year, they drew the master plan for the campus. It was their concept to cluster the main buildings around the summit of College Hill.

The first building designed by Davis in Bowling Green was City Hall which was completed in 1907. The first building on Western's campus designed by Davis was Van Meter Auditorium, completed in 1910.

Architectural plans drawn by Davis include hotels, school buildings, a spinning mill, public libraries and other diverse buildings. Davis avoided residential construction. He said, "If you build houses, you have to deal with the fair sex, and durn 'em, you can't please 'em!"

The buildings on Western's campus and the many throughout several states stand as monuments to the long and illustrious career of Brinton Davis. It was said that Davis "was born with a pencil and rule in his hand with a creative idea that has brought him not merely a passing success but a great one."

## BRINTON B. DAVIS BUILDINGS

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 1910    | Van Meter Auditorium                       |
| 1924    | Perry Snell Hall                           |
| 1927    | Heating Plant                              |
|         | Stadium                                    |
|         | Library Building (Gordon Wilson Hall)      |
| 1928    | Manual Arts Building                       |
|         | West Hall (Schneider Hall)                 |
| 1930    | Health Building (Helm Library)             |
| 1931    | The President's Home (Craig Alumni Center) |
| 1931-32 | The Kentucky Building                      |
|         | Opened 1939                                |
| 1937    | Cherry Hall                                |

# The Kentucky Building



Georgian Revival structure

Work on building began in 1930

Completed in 1939 (Construction stopped in 1934 because funds were depleted.)

James M. Ingram, architect, was responsible for finishing the interior.

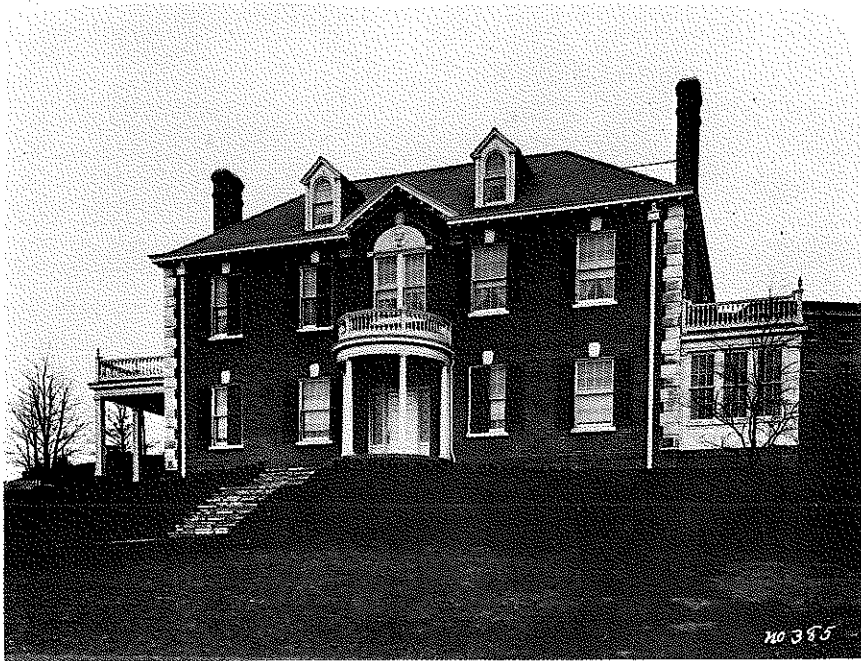
Building was used for classrooms while Cherry Hall was being completed, 1936/37

This building was designed to serve as a depository for Kentuckiana materials, an idea developed in the early 1920's by Henry H. Cherry.

Renovation and expansion - 1977/78

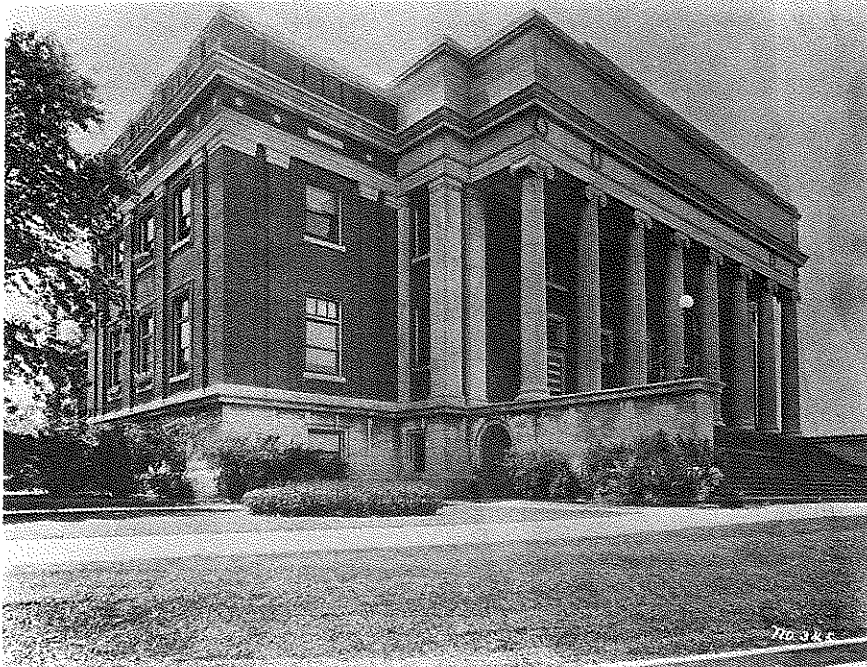
New addition dedicated July 4, 1980

# The President's Home



Georgian Revival  
Contract - \$26,050  
Van Winkle Construction Company, Louisville, KY  
Completed - Fall 1931  
Renovated - 1938  
Converted to Alumni Center - 1960

# Van Meter Auditorium



First building erected on campus designed by Brinton B. Davis.

Classic Revival

Named for Captain Charles J. Van Meter, riverboat captain, chancellor of the Western State Normal School, and one of the developers of Bowling Green Business University.

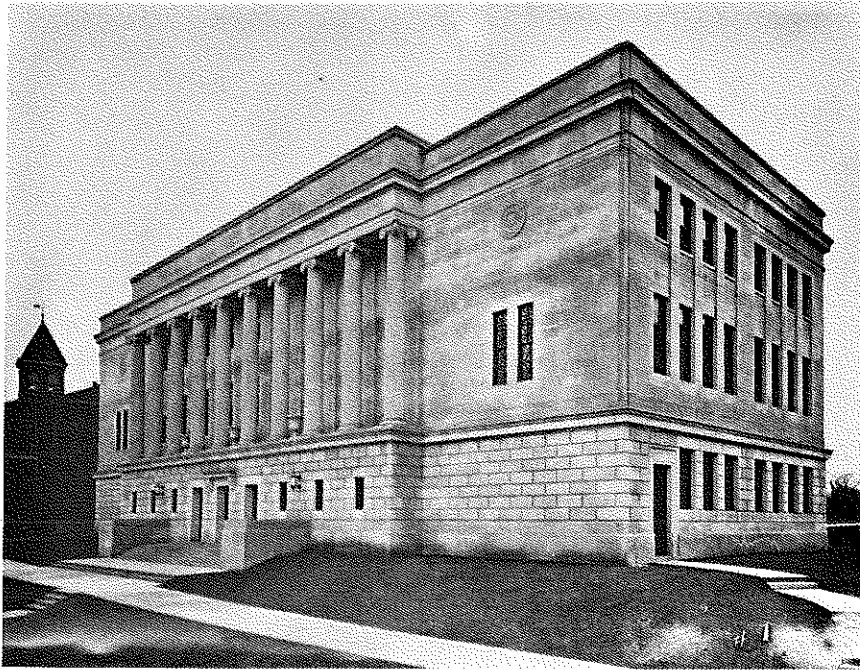
Cost - \$147,000

Jacob Bornstein, a stonemason from Louisville, contractor.

Dedicated - May 5, 1911

Renovations - 1968/9, 1971

# Library Building



Classic Revival building with Ionic order.

Cost - \$200,000

Raymond Construction Company, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Cornerstone laid in 1926 and building completed in 1927.

Vacated September 1965 when Margie Helm Library opened.

Renamed in honor of Gordon Wilson, Sr., English professor  
and folklorist.

Renovations - 1967/68. In 1970's a rear steel and glass  
stairway was added.



# Cherry Hall



Classic Revival building with a temple front and Ionic order.

Named after Western Kentucky University's first president, Henry Hardin Cherry. Cherry died August 1, before the building's dedication on November 16 (Cherry's birthday).

Cost - \$560,000

Struck Construction Company of Louisville

Completed - 1937

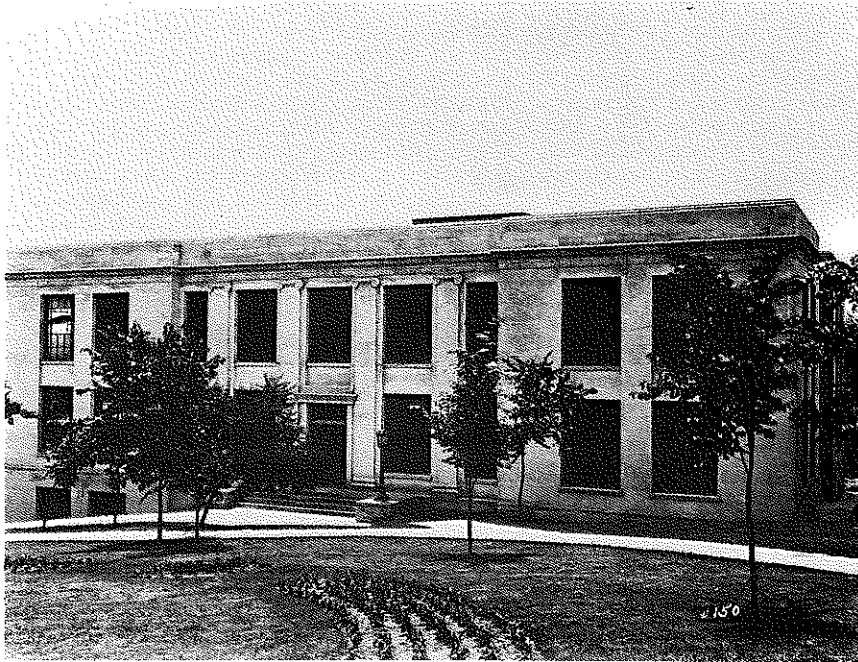
Chimes - 1937, 1959, 1974. (1937 - \$6,000 for 25 cathedral chimes).

Two life-size bas-relief panels, dedicated to "The Sciences" adorn Cherry Hall.

A \$10,000 statue of Henry Hardin Cherry, financed by contributions, was unveiled on November 16, 1937, today known as Founder's Day at Western.

Renovations - Exits 1960/61; Lighting 1965; New rear entrance and elevator 1973/74.

# Manual Arts Building



Classic Revival with Ionic order pilasters

Contract - \$57,000

Raymond Construction Company, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Completed - Fall 1928

Renovations - 1960, 1961, 1964, 1965; closed for remodeling  
1975.

Windows replaced in renovation.

Open house for renovated building, October 29, 1977

# Health Building



Eclectic structure with terra cotta frieze, the only instance of this type of material in the area.

Cost - \$250,000

Moore Brothers Construction Company of Louisville

Completed in 1930

Originally built as a gymnasium. Also housed a clinic and a large band practice room.

Renovated to Margie Helm Library, occupied 1965.

Marjorie Helm served as librarian for Western for many years.

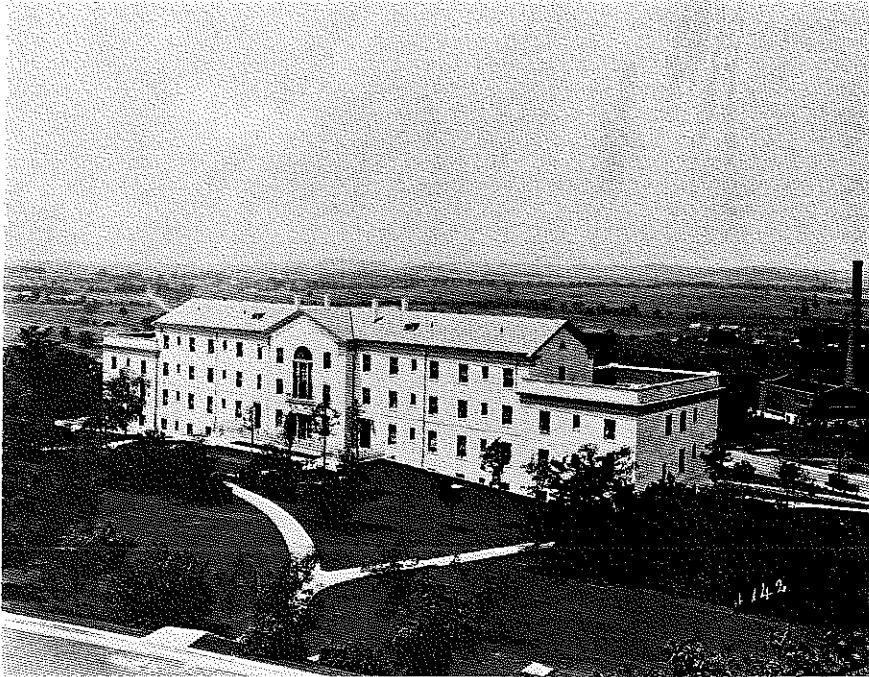
A steel and glass entrance was added during the 1960's

# Stadium



Classic Revival Colonnade constructed of limestone.  
Cost - \$50,000  
Raymond Construction Company, Bowling Green, Kentucky  
Completed - November 1927  
Lights installed, 1946  
Renovated - 1962  
Metal Bleachers - 1963-replaced wooden bleachers

# West Hall



Georgian Revival

Cost - \$160,000

Raymond Construction Company, Bowling Green, Kentucky

Completed - Fall 1928

Renovations - 1959, 1963, 1965, 1977

Name changed to Whitestone Hall - 1961

Name changed to Florence Schneider Hall - 1969

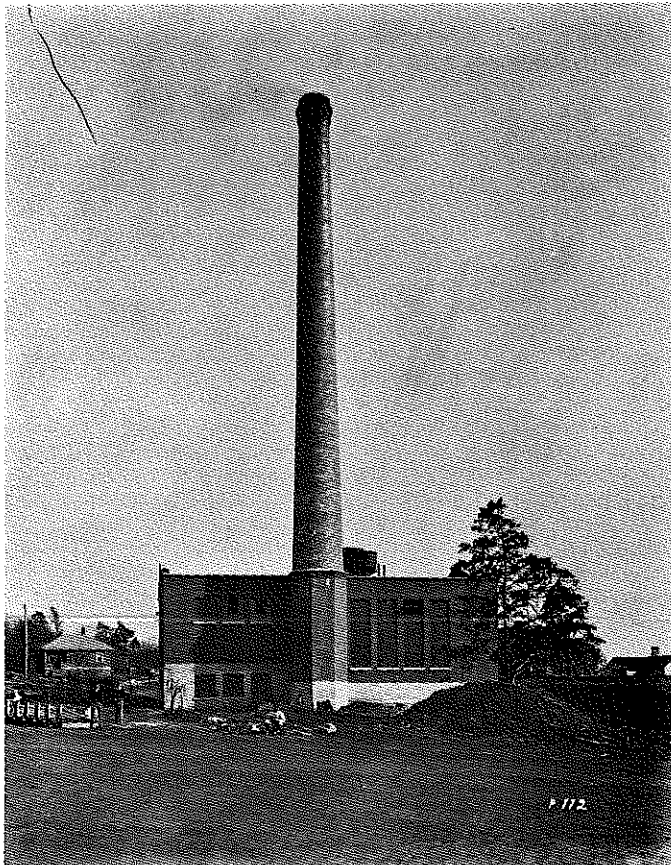
Schneider served the university for many years as secretary, bookkeeper, registrar and bursar.

The latest renovation (1977) was complete throughout the interior, with some visible external improvements.

This was done under the supervision of architect Joseph P. Wilk. The general contract work was done by Meco, Incorporation, Louisville, at a cost of \$870,000.

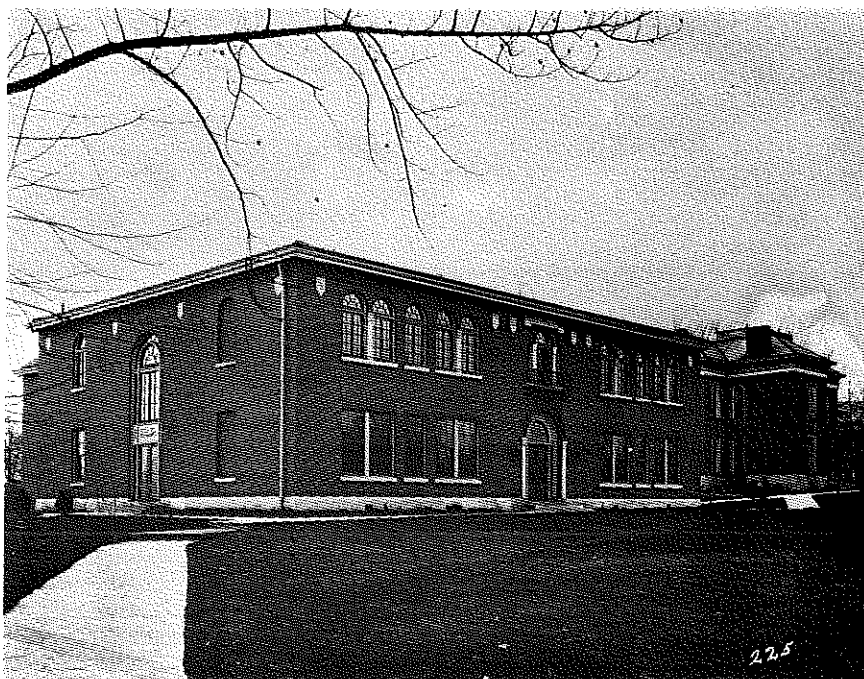
Now houses the Center for Continuing Education

# Heating Plant



Raymond Construction Company, Bowling Green, Kentucky  
Completed - 1927  
Renovations - 1938; major remodeling, 1956; (expanded,  
1963 with a bid of \$402,725.)  
A brick and glass wing was added during the 1970's.

# Perry Snell Hall



Georgian Revival

Cost - \$85,000

Raymond Construction Company, Bowling Green, Kentucky.

Dedicated - November 19, 1924

Acquired by Western - 1928

418 seat auditorium has seats from the Old Princess Theatre.

Renovated - 1959/60

Named for Perry Snell, a benefactor of Ogden College.

Snell gave the Florentine statuary, "Four Seasons" to Western in 1926.

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Information about the Davis buildings on Western's campus was provided by Helen Knight, University Archival Cataloguer, Helm Library and Landmark Association of Bowling Green and Warren County, Inc., ARCHITECTURE OF WARREN COUNTY, KENTUCKY 1790-1940. \*

\*Available in The Museum Store